

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00 DHA-02
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R 131033Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7010
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
NSC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ALGIERS 2038

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, XF, SS, SCUL, SREF, AG, US
SUBJ: KEY POINTS COVERED IN AMBASSADOR HAYNES' MEETING WITH SECYGEN
OF GOVERNMENT, SMAIL HAMDANI

IN VERY FRANK TWO-HOUR COUTRESY CALL AT PRESIDENCY ON SMAIL HAMDANI,
NEWLY-APPOINTED SECRETARY GENERAL OF GOVERNMENT, ON AUGUST 9, HE
MADE FOLLOWING SUBSTANTIVE POINTS TO AMBASSADOR HAYNES:

1. EGYPTIAN-LIBYAN DISPUTE: IN ASSESSING THE LEADERS OF THESE TWO
COUNTRIES, HAMDANI SAID OF QADHAFI THAT HE DOES NOT ALWAYS CONDUCT
HIMSELF IN MANNER WHICH ALGERIAN GOVERNMENT LIKES. HE IS VERY UNPRE-
DICTABLE, HE SAID. ACCORDING TO HAMDANI, QADHAFI'S BIG PROBLEM IS
THAT HE IS DEPENDENT ON EGYPTIAN MANPOWER TO RUN HIS COUNTRY. AS
FOR SADAT, HAMDANI FELT THAT BLOW EGYPT DEALT LIBYA DID NOT RESULT
IN RALLYING EGYPTIAN PEOPLE BEHIND SADAT AS HE EXPECTED IT WOULD.

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SADAT, HE SAID, HAS OVERWHELMING INTERNAL SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND
ECONOMIC PROBLEMS TO OVERCOME AND NEEDS A BIG SUCCESS LIKE REOPEN-
ING OF SUEZ CANAL TO RALLY HIS PEOPLE BEHIND HIM.

2. PROPOSED BOUMEDIENE VISIT TO US: HAMDANI SAYS THAT BOUMEDIENE
IS ANXIOUS TO VISIT PRESIDENT CARTER IN US BECAUSE HE FEELS THAT
THEY HAVE A LOT IN COMMON. HAMDANI ALSO EXPRESSED PERSONAL OPINION

THAT BEST WAY TO CEMENT US-ALGERIAN RELATIONS IS THROUGH DEVELOPMENT OF A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEADERS OF TWO COUNTRIES.

3. SAHARA SITUATION: HAMDANI AND AMBASSADOR DISCUSSED SAHARA SITUATION AT CONSIDERABLE LENGTH, IN COURSE OF WHICH HAMDANI MADE FOLLOWING POINTS OF GENERAL INTEREST:

A. MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA CANNOT DEFEAT POLISARIO WITH CONVENTIONAL MILITARY RESPONSE TO WHAT IS ESSENTIALLY A POPULAR GUERRILLA EFFORT; HE CITED FRENCH DEFEAT BY ALGERIANS AND FRENCH AND AMERICAN DEFEATS IN VIET NAM AS SUPPORTING EVIDENCE.

B. ALGERIA'S OBJECTIVE IN SUPPORTING POLISARIO POSITION IS NOT REPEAT NOT TO OVERTHROW KING HASSAN; IF THIS WERE ALGERIAN OBJECTIVE, HAMDANI SAID, THERE WERE OTHER MORE EFFECTIVE WAYS OF ACHIEVING IT THAN THROUGH MILITARY CONFRONTATION.

C. ALGERIA WANTS TO AVOID WAR WITH MOROCCO OVER SAHARA AT ALL COSTS BECAUSE ALL SIDES WOULD BE LOSERS IN SUCH WAR; ALGERIA'S SOLE OBJECTIVE IS TO SEE A REFERENDUM TAKE PLACE IN SAHARA WITH RESULTS OF WHICH ALGERIA WOULD ABIDE EVEN IF SAHRAOUI CHOSE ASSOCIATION WITH MAURITANIA AND MOROCCO.

D. AMBASSADOR HAYNES ONCE AGAIN EXPLAINED US POLICY OF NEUTRALITY ON POLITICAL ASPECTS OF SAHARA PROBLEM WHILE REMAINING CONCERNED FOR ITS HUMANITARIAN ASPECTS RELATING TO WELL-BEING OF SAHRAOUI REFUGEES IN ALGERIA. HAMDANI SEEMED GENUINELY SURPRISED TO LEARN THAT UNHCR WAS HAVING DIFFICULTY GETTING ALGERIAN AUTHORITIES TO ALLOW UNHCR TO BASE A REPRESENTATIVE IN TINDOUF TO ADMINISTER THEIR RELIEF PROGRAM. HE PROMISED TO INVESTIGATE AND REPORT BACK TO AMB-
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ASSADOR. (HE SUBSEQUENTLY PHONED TO SAY THAT HEAD OF ALGERIAN RED CRESCENT WAS ABROAD FOR PERIOD OF RAMADHAN AND THAT HE, THEREFORE, COULD NOT RESOLVE PROBLEM UNTIL HIS RETURN IN MID-SEPTEMBER.)

E. HAMDANI SAID THAT ALGERIAN GOVERNMENT UNDERSTANDS AND APPRECIATES US, POLICY. NEVERTHELESS, HE URGED US TO LEAN ON KING HASSAN TO RESTRAIN HIM FROM ATTACKING ALGERIA.

4. MID EAST CRISIS: HAMDANI SAID HIS GOVERNMENT IS VERY DISCOURAGED BY RESULTS THUS FAR OF SECRETARY'S MIDDLE EAST MISSION. HE REITERATED THAT ALGERIA WOULD CONTINUE TO SUPPORT PLO POSITION. NEVERTHELESS, HE WANTED US TO KNOW THAT HIS GOVERNMENT URGED AND SUPPORTED CONTINUATION OF US EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE A MIDDLE EASTERN PEACE. IT WAS HIS OPINION THAT KEEPING INTERESTED PARTIES TALKING WAS BEST WAY TO AVOID THEIR RESORTING TO WARFARE AGAIN.

5. EMBASSY-SPONSORED ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROGRAM: HAMDANI RAISED SUBJECT OF PRESIDENT'S RECOGNITION OF NEED FOR ENGLISH-LANGUAGE TRAINING IN ALGERIA AS OUR COMMERCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL RELATIONS INCREASE. AMBASSADOR HAYNES SAID HE WAS DELIGHTED TO HEAR OF THIS AS EMBASSY HAD ENCOUNTERED A CERTAIN LACK OF ENTHUSIASM IN PAST WHEN SUCH PROGRAM WAS PROPOSED. HAMDANI IMPLIED THAT TIME IS NOW RIGHT TO PURSUE SUBJECT.

6. FUTURE CONTACTS WITH AMBASSADOR: AT AMBASSADOR HAYNES' SUGGESTION, HAMDANI AGREED TO MEET QUARTERLY WITH AMBASSADOR FOR TOUR D' HORIZON TALKS ON STATUS OF US-ALGERIAN RELATIONS.HAYNES

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